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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**INDIANAPOLIS MAN SENTENCED TO 27.5 YEARS IN
FEDERAL PRISON FOR LEADING ARMED ROBBERY CREW**

PRESS RELEASE

Susan W. Brooks, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, announced that STEVEN MASON, 23, Indianapolis, Indiana, was sentenced to 330 months imprisonment today by U.S. District Judge David F. Hamilton following his guilty plea to charges of robbery affecting interstate commerce, attempted robbery affecting interstate commerce, and discharge of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence. This case was the result of a joint investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives, the Indianapolis Police Department, the Marion County Sheriff's Department, and the Lawrence Police Department, and is part of the SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS initiative.

MASON and two co-defendants, who have not yet been sentenced, committed a series of violent armed robberies and attempted armed robberies between June 23 and July 11, 2005. The

robberies took place at Steak-N-Shake restaurants, Village Pantry convenience stores, and a Joe's Junction/Phillips 66 convenience store. In addition to taking cash from the businesses at gunpoint, MASON and his accomplices took money and personal property from employees and customers. Victims were shot during the June 23 attempted armed robbery of the Village Pantry and the July 11 attempted armed robbery of Joe's Junction. In announcing the sentence, Judge Hamilton commented that MASON's "conduct showed utter disregard for human life."

United States Attorney Susan W. Brooks applauded the joint efforts of local police and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. "We are committed to combating these kind of groups that repeatedly engage in violent robberies. The message is that gun crime has severe consequences."

According to Assistant United States Attorney James P. Hanlon, who prosecuted the case for the government, MASON was also ordered to make restitution to the victims.

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